

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 66

16p



The
Pirates of Ka-Lor

STARBLAZER

LONG AGO, PIRATES TERRORISED THE SEVEN SEAS OF OLD EARTH. CENTURIES LATER, A NEW BREED OF BUCCANEERS WAS BORN, AS BLOODTHIRSTY AS THEIR FOREFATHERS AND WITH THE OCEANS OF SPACE THEIR HUNTING GROUND. THEY PLUNDERED, MURDERED AND FUGHT THEIR WAY THRDUGH SPACE IN A NEVER ENDING ORGY OF DESTRUCTION. THEY HAD TO BE STOPPED, ESPECIALLY THE MDST NOTORIDUS—CAPTAIN TEACH—BLACKBEARD.

The Pirates of Kalar

THE SPACE CRUISER 'GALOS' HEADED THROUGH DARK DIMENSIONS OF SPACE—
DESTINATION EARTH.



4
THE CRUISER'S MISSION WAS TO DELIVER A CAPTURED SPACE PIRATE TO EARTH FOR TRIAL.

DON'T FOOL YOURSELF! I'LL NOT
STAND TRIAL. THIS CRAFT
WON'T MAKE IT TO EARTH.

DON'T BET ON IT, KRAL.

IF YOU THINK YOUR PIRATE FRIENDS
ARE GOING TO STAGE A RESCUE,
YOU'RE MISTAKEN. THIS MISSION IS
TOP SECURITY. APART FROM THE
CREW, ONLY THE FEDERATION TOP
BRASS KNOW THAT YOU'RE ABOARD
THIS CRAFT.

WE SHALL SEE, EARTHMAN.

'GALOS' WAS CARRYING A MINIMAL OPERATIONAL CREW—SKIPPER MARTIN FOSTER, TECHNICIAN JOE FONG AND A MARK II ANTI CRIME OPERATIONS ROBOT KNOWN AS ACOR. SPACE COMMANDO LIEUTENANT STEVE RYDER HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE CRAFT AS PRISONER'S ESCORT.

YOU'LL BE CLAIMING SOME LEAVE WHEN WE GET EARTHSIDE, STEVE?

NO, I WANT TO GET BACK TO MY UNIT. WE MAY HAVE DESTROYED ONE PIRATE SHIP AND CAPTURED KRAL BUT THERE ARE MORE. THE SPACEWAYS AREN'T FREE OF PIRATES YET.

IT'S THEIR LEADER WE'RE AFTER—CAPTAIN TEACH. IF WE CAN GET HIM THE SPACE BUCCANEERS WILL BE FINISHED.

HE'S TOO SMART FOR THE GALACTIC FEDERATION, STEVE. HE'S AVOIDED CAPTURE SO FAR.

IT IS CURIOUS THAT THE PIRATE LEADER SHOULD BE CALLED CAPTAIN TEACH. ON EARTH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LIVED ONE OF THE SAME NAME—EDWARD TEACH. HE WAS KNOWN AS BLACKBEARD AND WAS THE MOST FEARED PIRATE ON THE SEVEN SEAS.

WHEN WE WANT A HISTORICAL LECTURE FROM YOU, TIN MAN, WE'LL ASK FOR IT.

ACOR WAS ONLY TRYING
TO SUPPLY USEFUL
INFORMATION, STEVE. IT
IS HIS FUNCTION.

I KNOW, JOE. MAYBE I'M GETTING
JUMPY, WORRYING ABOUT KRAL.

THE CRUISER'S PROXIMITY INDICATOR PICKED UP AN APPROACHING VESSEL.

WHAT IS IT, SKIPPER?

I DON'T KNOW. IT'S NOT
REPLYING TO IDENTITY REQUEST SIGNALS.

AS THE VESSEL CAME CLOSER . . .

IT'S A PIRATE SHIP!

MAN THE GUNSI

A FACE APPEARED ON THE VIEWING SCREEN OF THE 'GALOS':

HEAVE TO, AND WE'LL DO YE NO HARM. WE WANT YOUR PRISONER!

SAVE YOUR BREATH. WE'RE NOT HANDING KRAL OVER WITHOUT A FIGHT!

WE CAN'T FIGHT, STEVE. WE HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH FIRE POWER. HAND OVER THE PRISONERS. IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!

NO! SWITCH TO MAX DRIVE. MAYBE WE CAN OUTRUN THEM!





YOU THINK THEY WILL NOT ATTACK FOR FEAR OF HURTING ME, IS THAT IT? YOU ARE WRONG, RYDER. WE OF THE PIRATING FRATERNITY DO NOT FEAR DEATH. IF YOU WILL NOT HAND ME OVER THEN THEY WILL KILL US ALL! WE'LL DIE TOGETHER, RYDER, YOU AND I!



HIS GUN OUT OF ACTION, RYDER RETURNED TO THE CONTROL CABIN.



THIS IS THE FASTEST CRUISER IN THE SPACE FED FLEET. THOSE PIRATES SHOULD BE LIGHT HOURS BEHIND BY NOW. WHY AREN'T THEY?

THE MAXI DRIVE POWER SOURCE IS OUT OF ACTION, STEVE. IT'S NO GOOD!



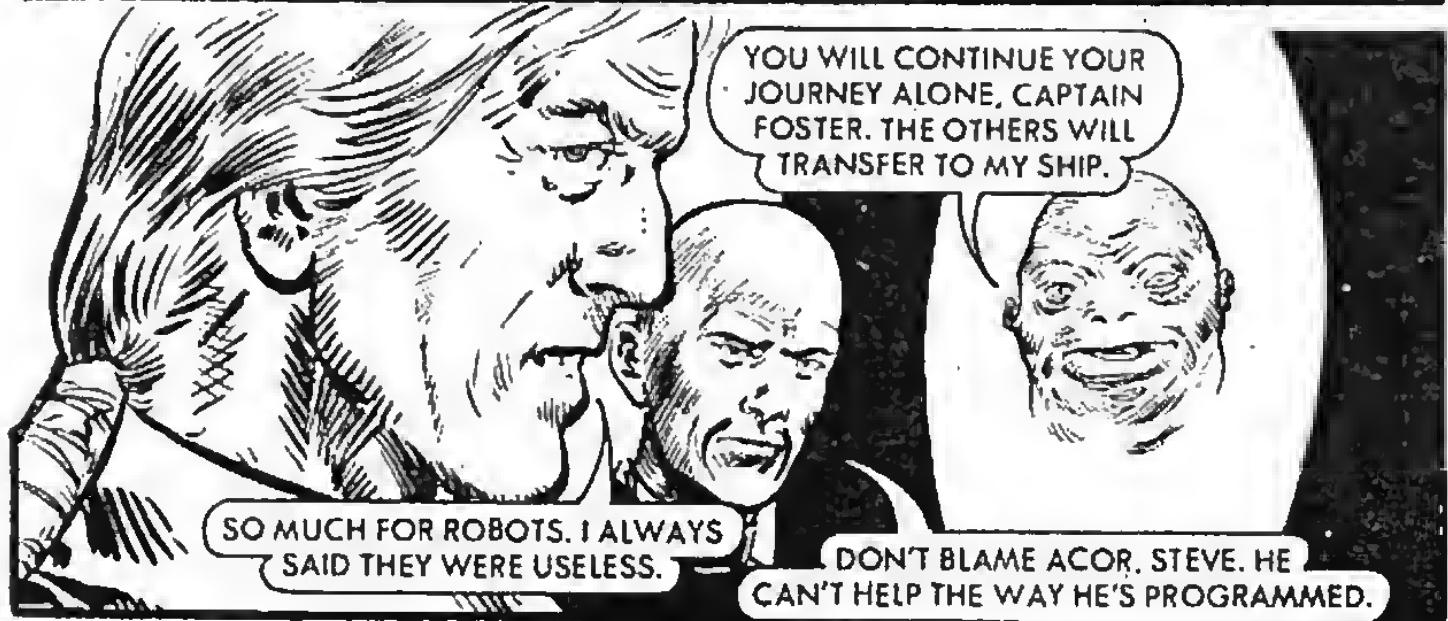
THE POWER SOURCE ISN'T OUT OF ACTION. YOU HAVEN'T SWITCHED IT ON! WHAT'S YOUR GAME, FOSTER?

YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT. GET BACK!



I DID A DEAL WITH KRAL. FOR MORE SPACE CREDITS THAN I'D EARN IN A LIFETIME SKIPPERING FOR THE LOUSY GALACTIC FEDERATION.

SO THAT'S HOW THEY KNEW! YOU FOOL, FOSTER! DO YOU THINK THEY'LL LET YOU GO FREE?



KRAL WAS RELEASED FROM HIS CELL. TRANSFER TO THE PIRATE VESSEL COMMENCED...



A LASER BLAST SEARED INTO ACOR'S CHEST, BURNING OUT HIS COMPO-CIRCUITS.



ONCE ON BOARD THE PIRATE VESSEL.

DESTROY THE CRUISER!
FOSTER'S USEFULNESS IS ENDED.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT.
IT'S COLD-BLOODED MURDER!

THE PIRATES METHODICALLY BLASTED 'GALOS' AND CAPTAIN FOSTER'S DREAMS OF WEALTH DIED WITH HIM . . .



INSIDE THE BATTERED ROBOT, AN AUTOMATIC ACTIVATOR SWITCHED TO EMERGENCY INDEPENDENT CIRCUITS . . . ACOR CAME SLOWLY BACK TO LIFE.

MUST RENDER ASSISTANCE . . . IF . . .
POSSIBLE . . .



ACOR USED MAGNAGRABS TO ATTACH HIMSELF TO THE PIRATE CRAFT'S HULL.

LET'S GET BACK TO BASE AND HAND THESE TWO EARTHLING'S TO CAPTAIN TEACH!

ENGAGE MAIN DRIVE!
SET COURSE FOR KA-LOR.

YES, RYDER THE PLANET KA-LOR IS OUR BASE. THE GALACTIC FEDERATION NEVER THOUGHT TO SEEK US THERE. AND DO NOT THINK YOU'LL FIND A WAY TO LET THEM KNOW. FOR YOU HAVE NOT LONG TO LIVE.

I DON'T BE TOO SURE OF THAT, KRALI



IN SECONDS THE LIGHT DRIVE TOOK THEM TO KA-LOR.



251e
THE PIRATE CRAFT CAME IN TO LAND IN
THE SPACEDOCK.

YOU SEE, RYDER? WE STORE OUR
CAPTURED GOODS HERE AND SELL THEM TO
SPACE MERCHANTS WHO ARE PREPARED
TO DEAL. A PROFITABLE BUSINESS
FOR US ALL.

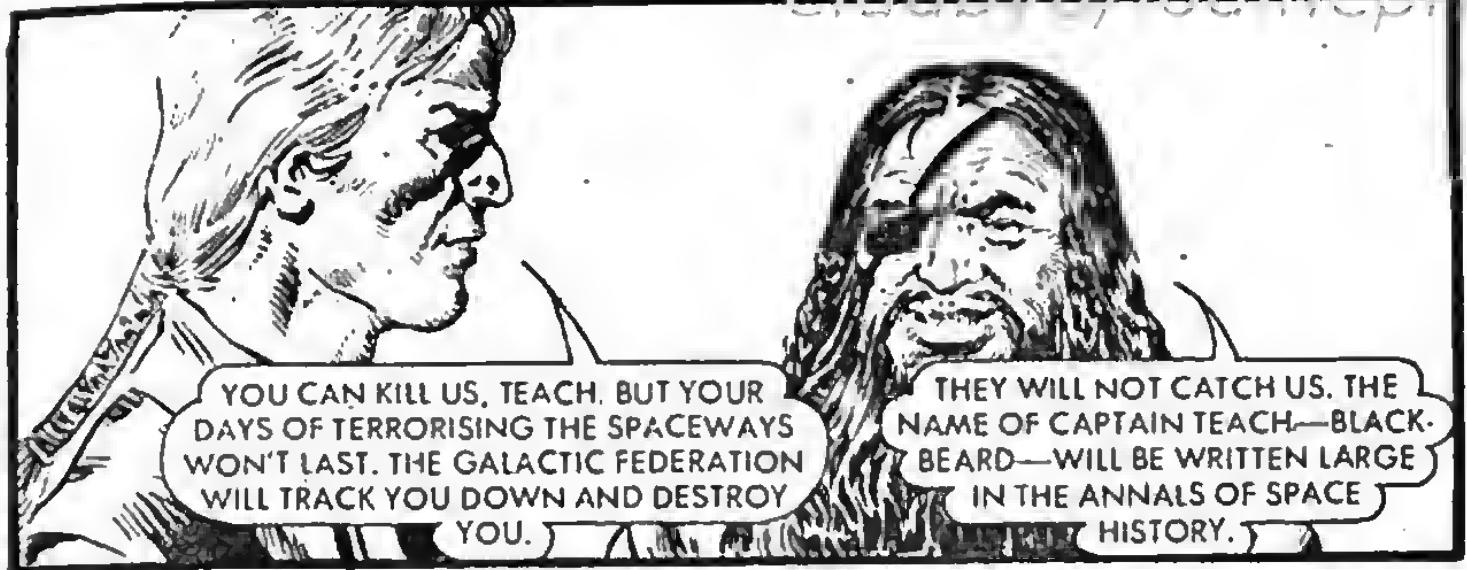


UNSEEN, ACOR SLIPPED TO THE GROUND.

IT IS NECESSARY TO HIDE AND
AWAIT A CHANCE TO HELP RYDER AND
FONG ...

RYDER AND FONG WERE TAKEN TO THE PIRATE LEADER, CAPTAIN TEACH.

SO, YOU RETURN TO THE FOLD.
KRAL, AND BRING TWO PRISONERS.
IT IS GOOD. MY TIRALS GROW
HUNGRY FOR MEAT.



TEACH LEFT THE AREA LEAVING FONG AND RYDER TO THE MERCY OF THE TIRALS.



WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THE STATUE!
IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE.

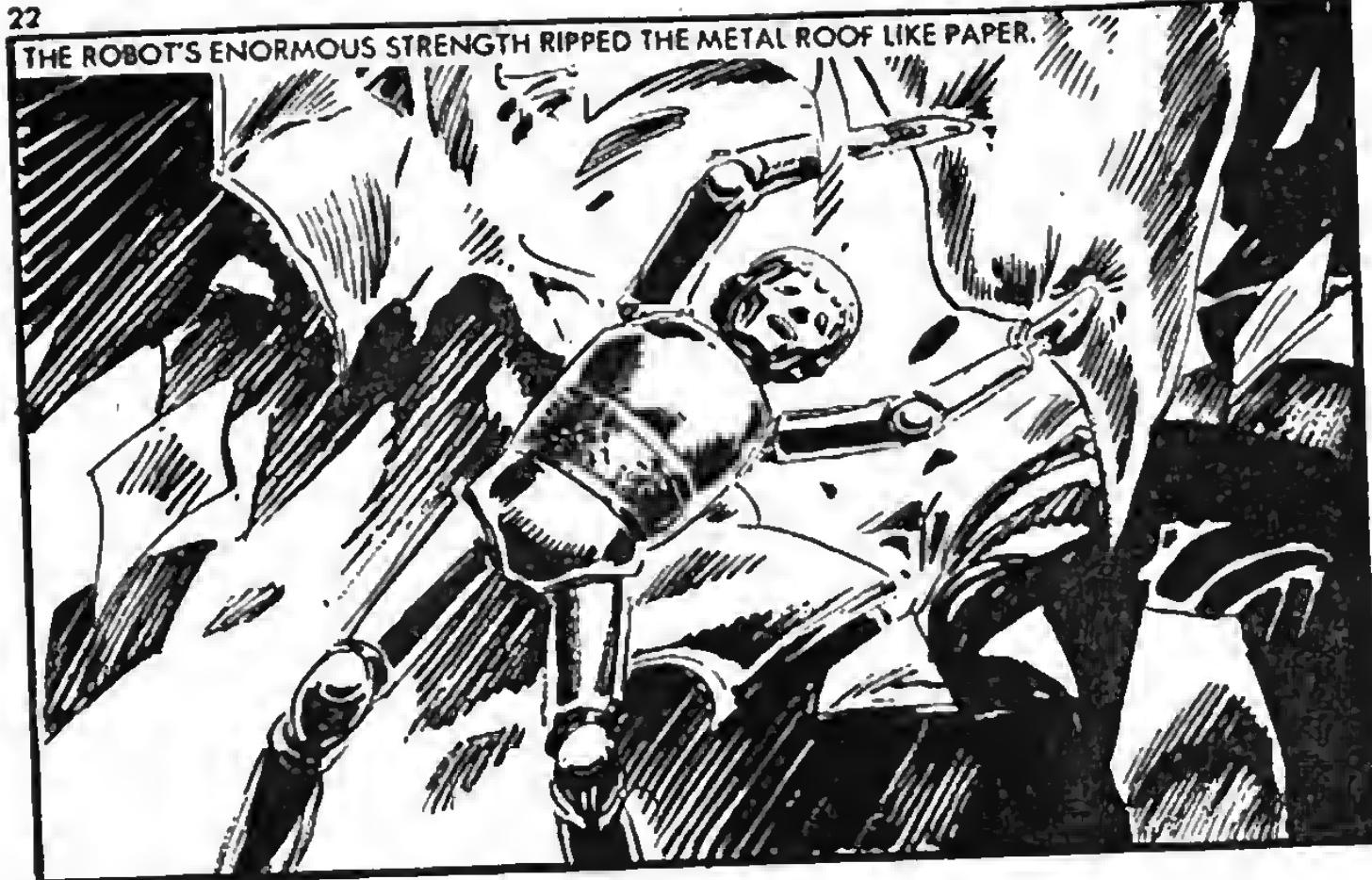
RIGHT, STEVE!

JUMP, JOE!

YOU BET!

THE WALLS ARE STONE BUT THIS
ROOF IS OF A METALLIC
SUBSTANCE THAT MAY YIELD.

ACOR HAD MANAGED TO ENTER THE BUILDING.



THEY WERE SOON SPOTTED!



STEVE THREW HIMSELF AT THE PIRATE.

WHAT WE NEED IS TRANSPORT!



RYDER FOUGHT TO CONTROL THE STRANGE CRAFT.

GO NOW. ESCAPE WHILE YOU MAY.

NOT WITHOUT YOU, ACOR.

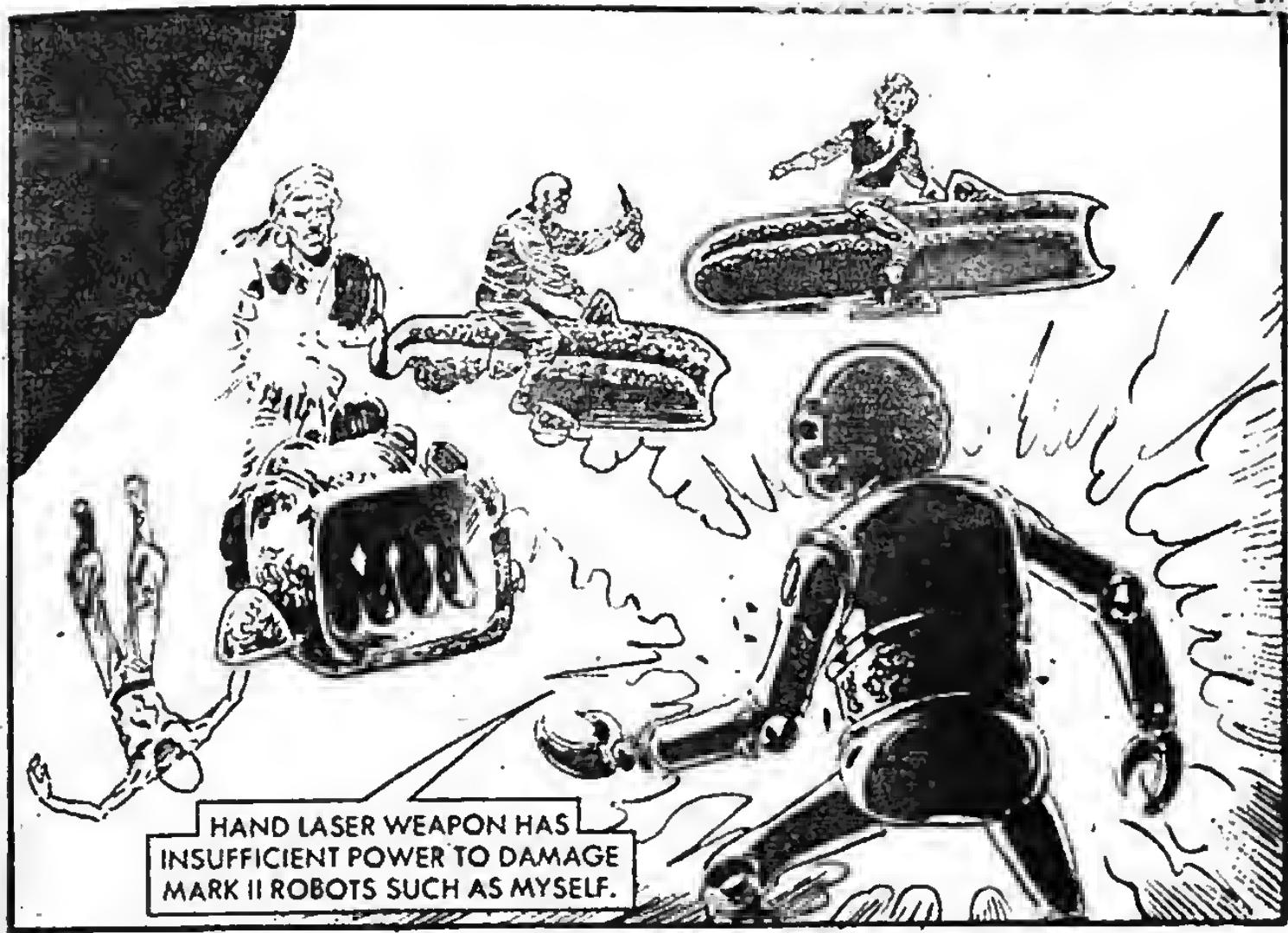


FONG CAPTURED A CRAFT—



GET YOURSELF
A GUN, JOE!







THE THREE HEADED OUT OF THE CITY.





THE FOREST SUDDENLY OPENED OUT INTO A CLEARING IN WHICH WERE WOODEN HUTS
AND . . . PEOPLE.

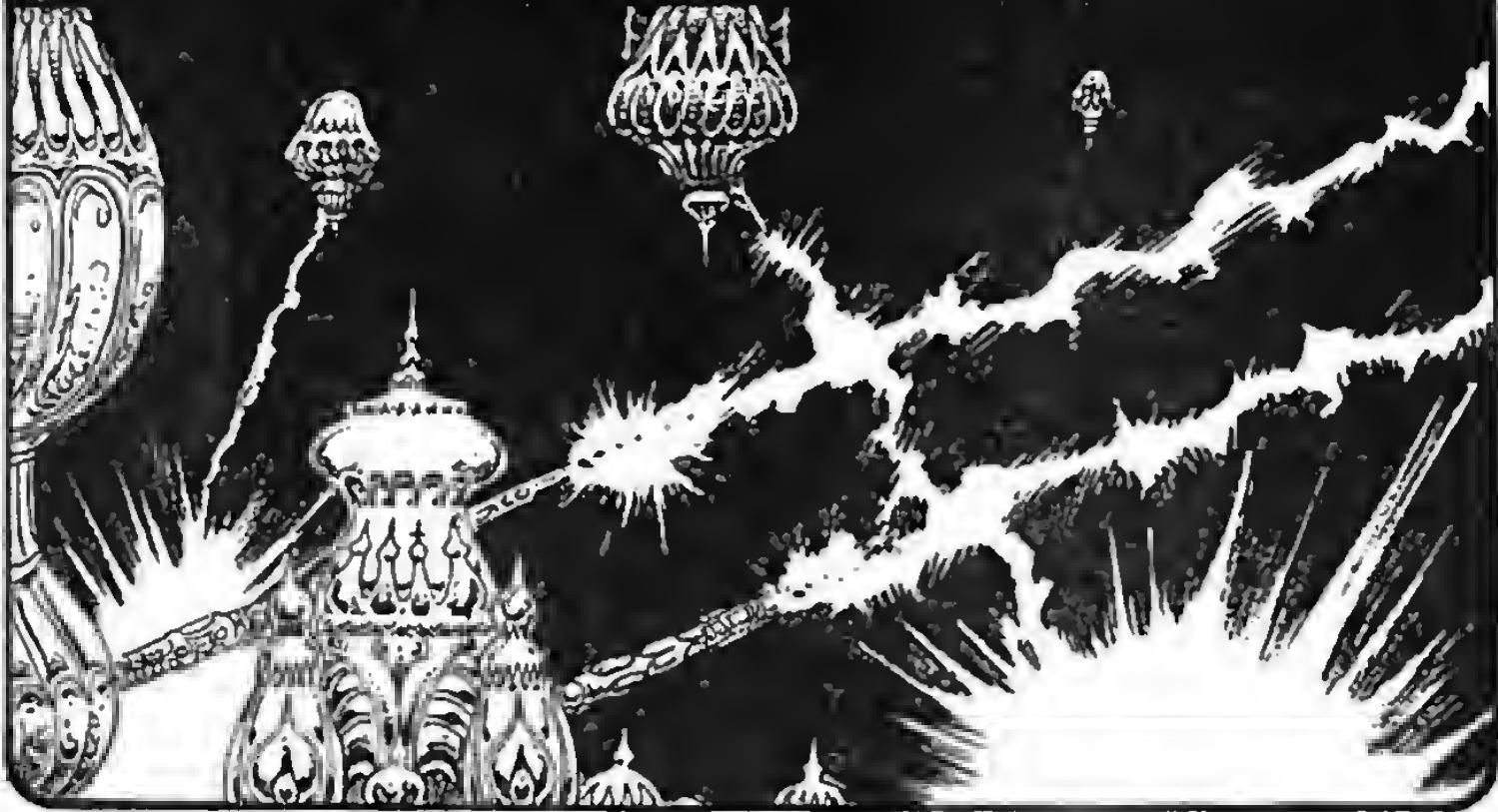


IF YOU BE NOT OF THOSE WHO NOW
CONTROL OUR CITY, THEN WELCOME,
STRANGERS.

WE'RE NOT PIRATES, OLD
MAN. BUT WHO ARE YOU?

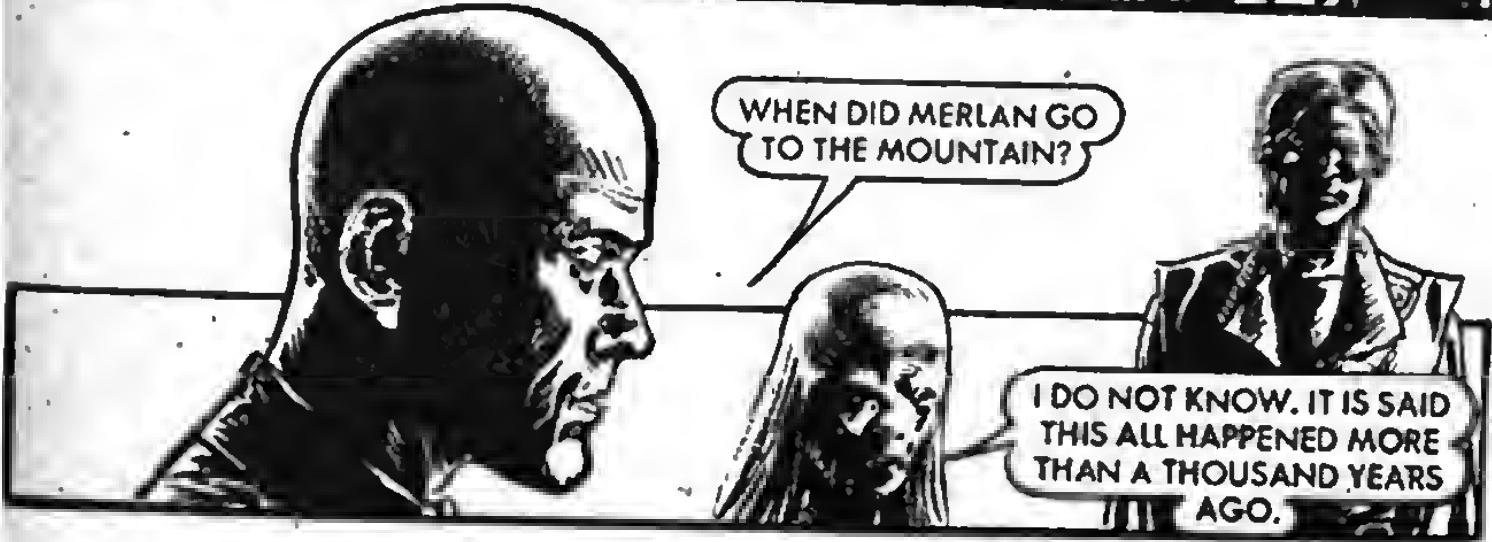
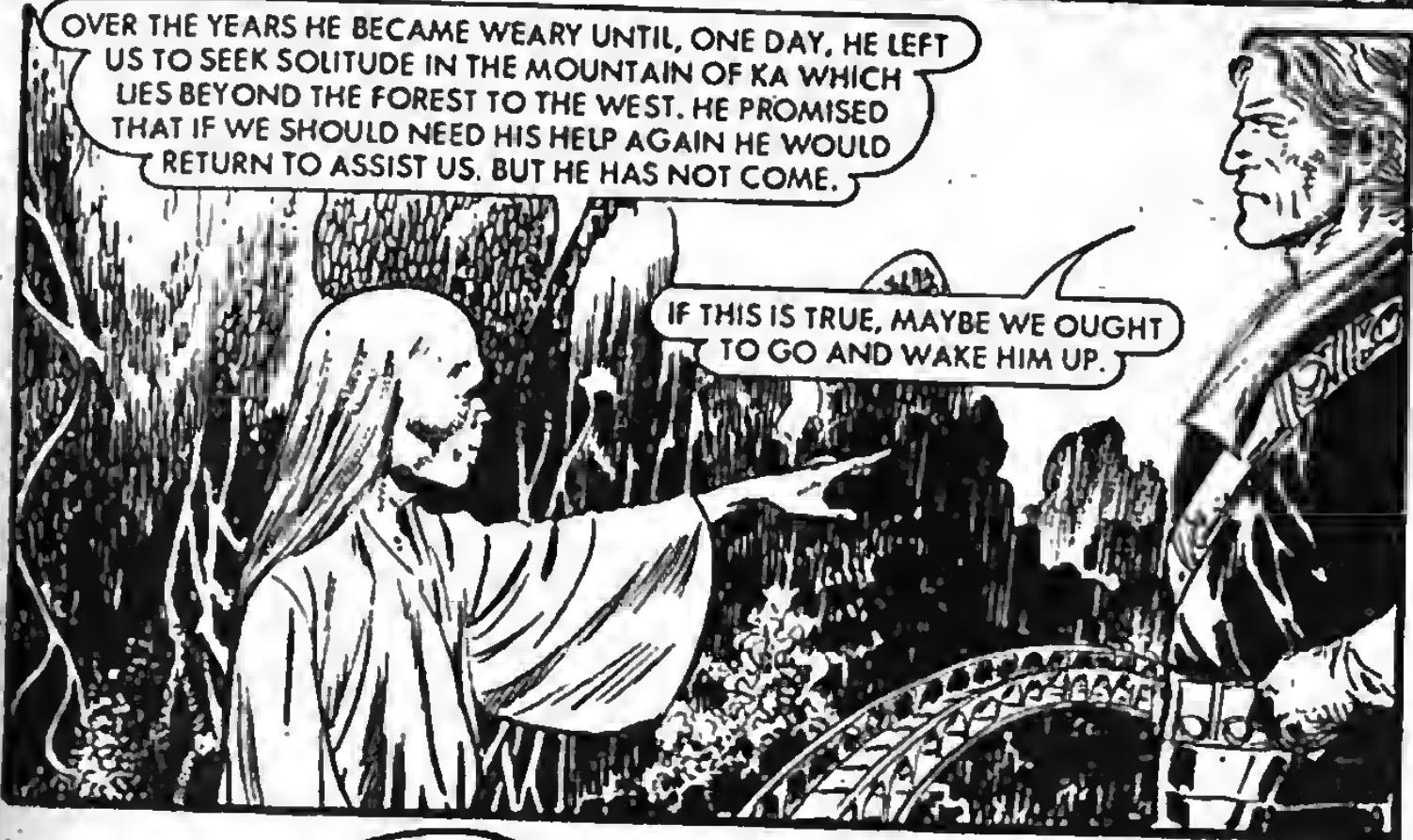


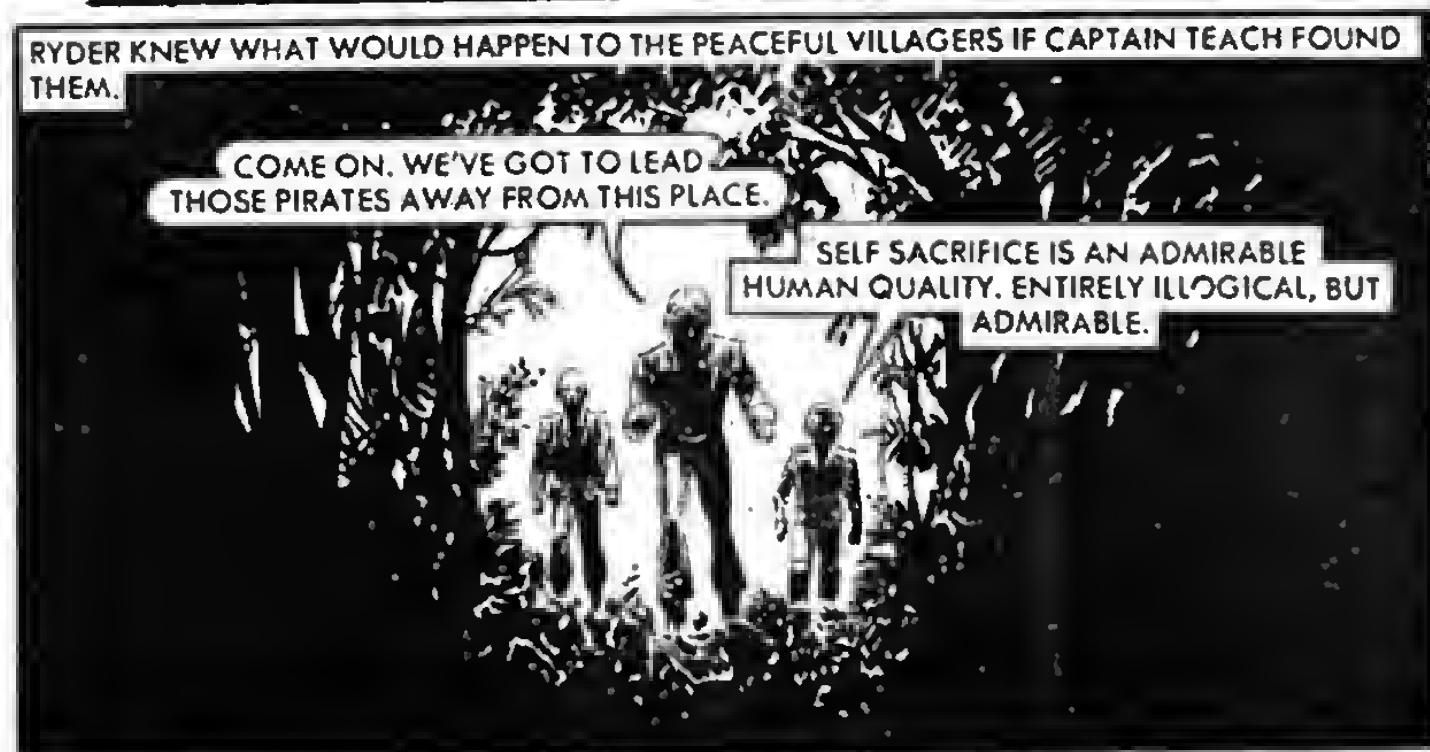
... NOTHING SEEMED TO EXIST FOR US BUT WAR. AS OUR TECHNOLOGY AND WEAPONS IMPROVED SO DID THOSE OF OUR ENEMIES. WE GREW TIRED OF WAR ...



... AND THEN ONE DAY THE GREAT MERLAN CAME FROM THE DARK REACHES OF SPACE. WE KNEW NOT WHO HE WAS BUT HE HAD POWER OVER THE ELEMENTS THEMSELVES AND DROVE OUR ENEMIES FROM US! "









BUT THEY COULDN'T OUT-RUN THE FLEET-FOOTED TIRALS.



RYDER DIDN'T SEE ANOTHER DANGER THAT APPROACHED!



FONG WAS UNABLE TO STOP THE PIRATES.

RUN, JOE! YOU'VE GOT TO GET AWAY.



ONE PIRATE WAS HIT—

HE'S TOO BUSY TRYING TO
KEEP CONTROL TO PAY MUCH
ATTENTION TO ME.



BUT THE PIRATE SPOTTED HIM TOO SOON. STILL HALF-TANGLED IN
THE NET, RYDER COULD ONLY GRAB FOR HIS GUN HAND.

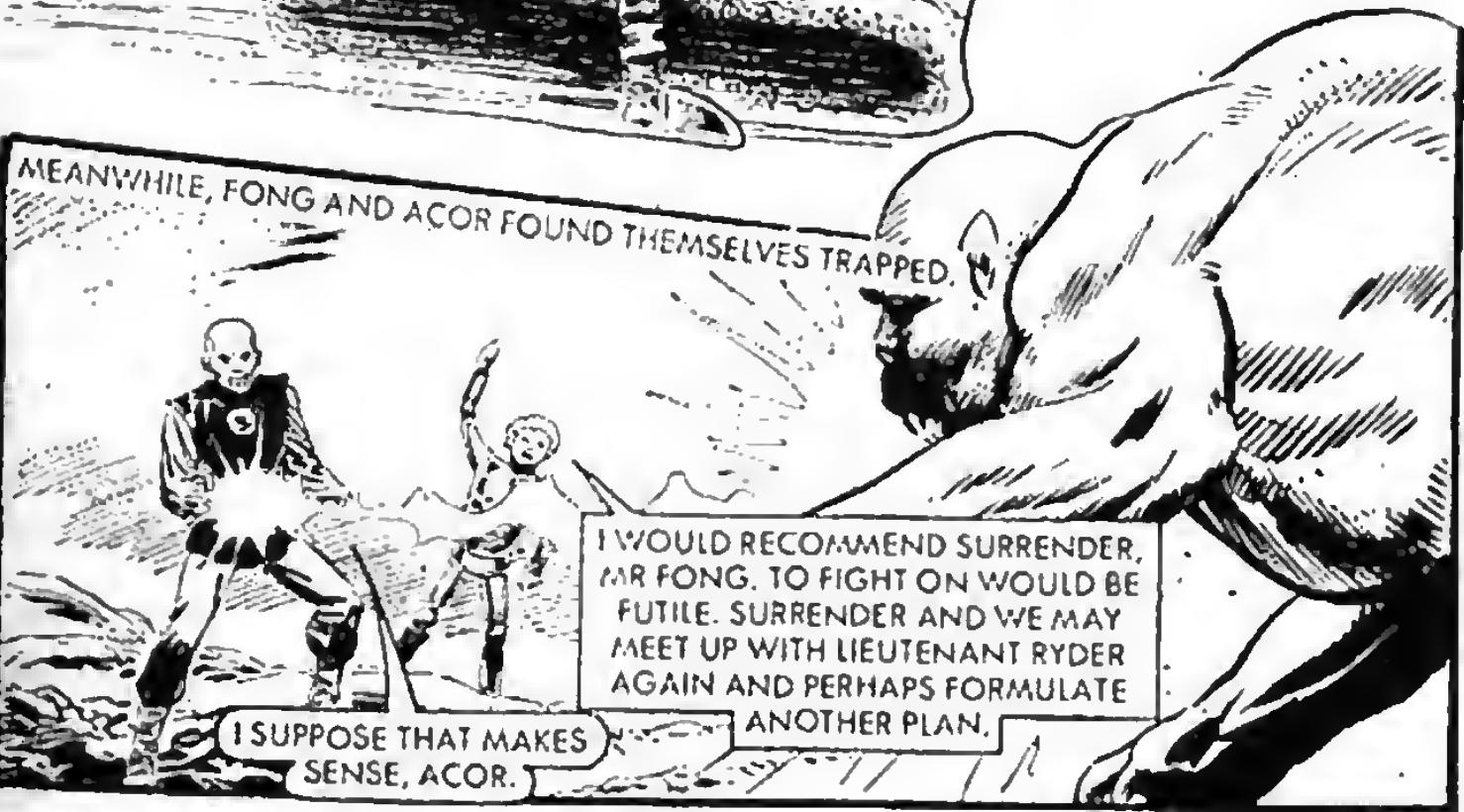
DIE, EARTHLING!



OUT OF CONTROL, THE TWO CRAFT BEGAN TO SPIRAL DOWN TOWARDS THE FOREST.

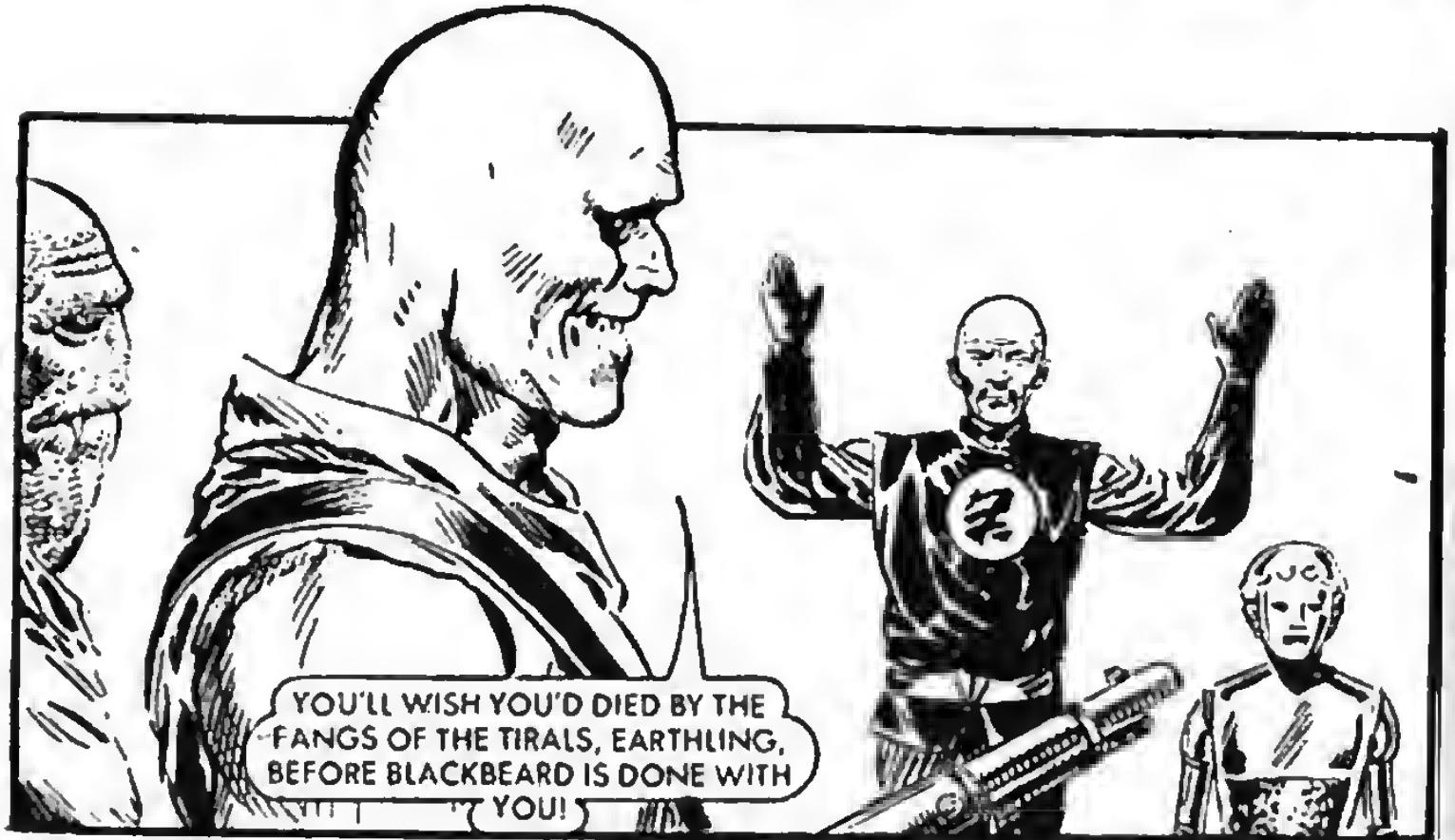


THE CRAFT LURCHED UPSIDE DOWN AND THE TWO COMBATANTS FELL.



THE PIRATE CHIEF ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.

THE COMMANDO KNOWN AS RYDER HAS BEEN CAPTURED AND NOW THE OTHER TWO HAVE SURRENDERED.



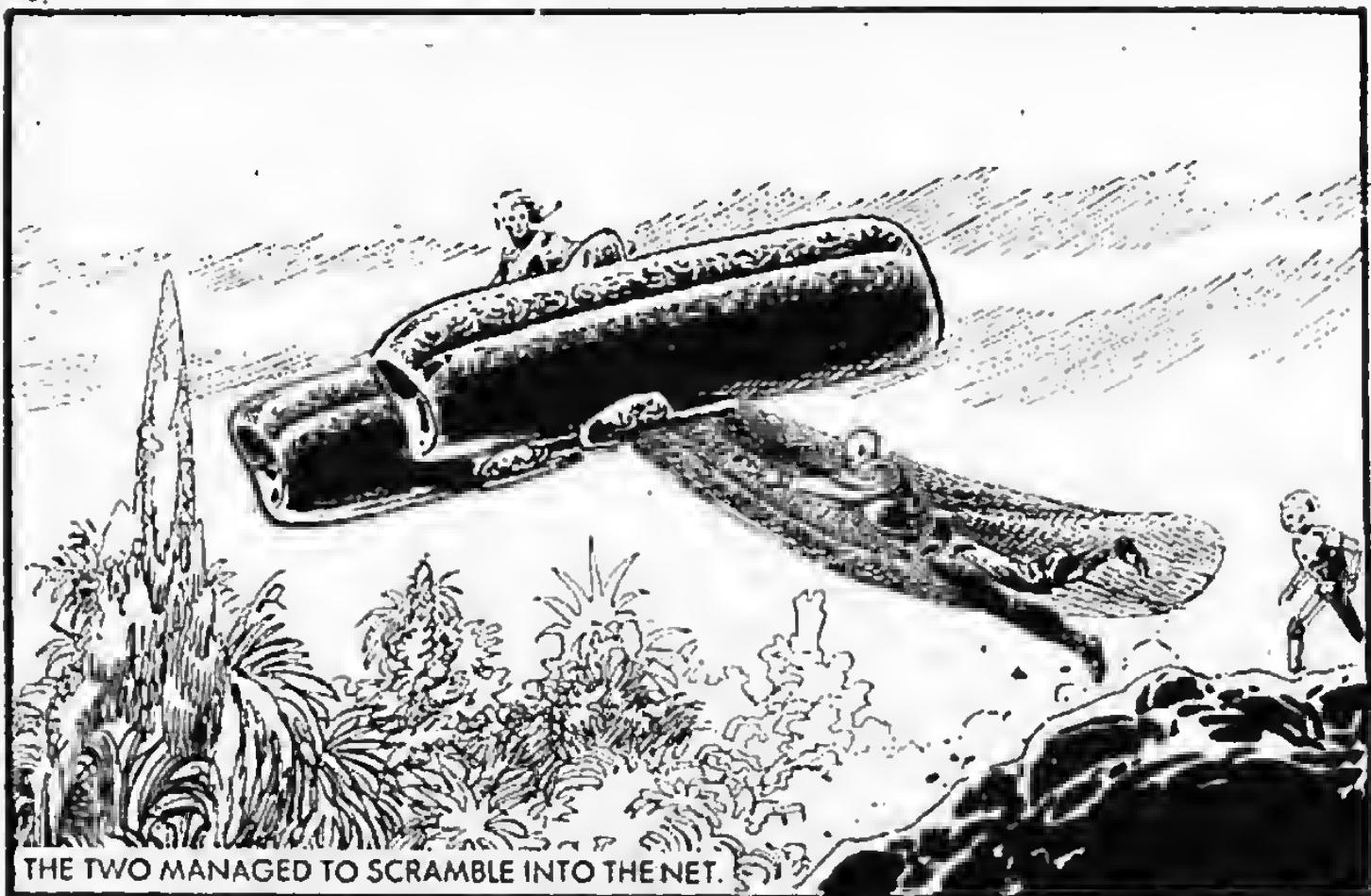
AT THAT MOMENT STEVE ARRIVED ON THE SCENE—

JOE! ACOR!
GRAB THE NET!



RIGHT, STEVE!





THE TWO MANAGED TO SCRAMBLE INTO THE NET.



HUGGING THE CLIFF SIDE, THEY MADE A POOR TARGET FOR THE PIRATES' LASERS.

WE'VE GOT TO LAY OUR
HANDS ON SOME WEAPONS.



IDIOTS! WE ARE FEARED THROUGHOUT
THE GALAXY YET WE LET TWO MEN AND A
ROBOT MAKE MONKEYS OF US! THEY MUST
BE DESTROYED.





IN A CLEARING NEARBY, SOME PIRATES WERE WORKING ON A GROUNDED ANTI-GRAV CRAFT.

IF WE JUMP THAT LOT IT'LL GIVE
US THE WEAPONS WE NEED AND A
CRAFT FOR ACOR TO USE. I'LL
CIRCLE ROUND BEHIND.

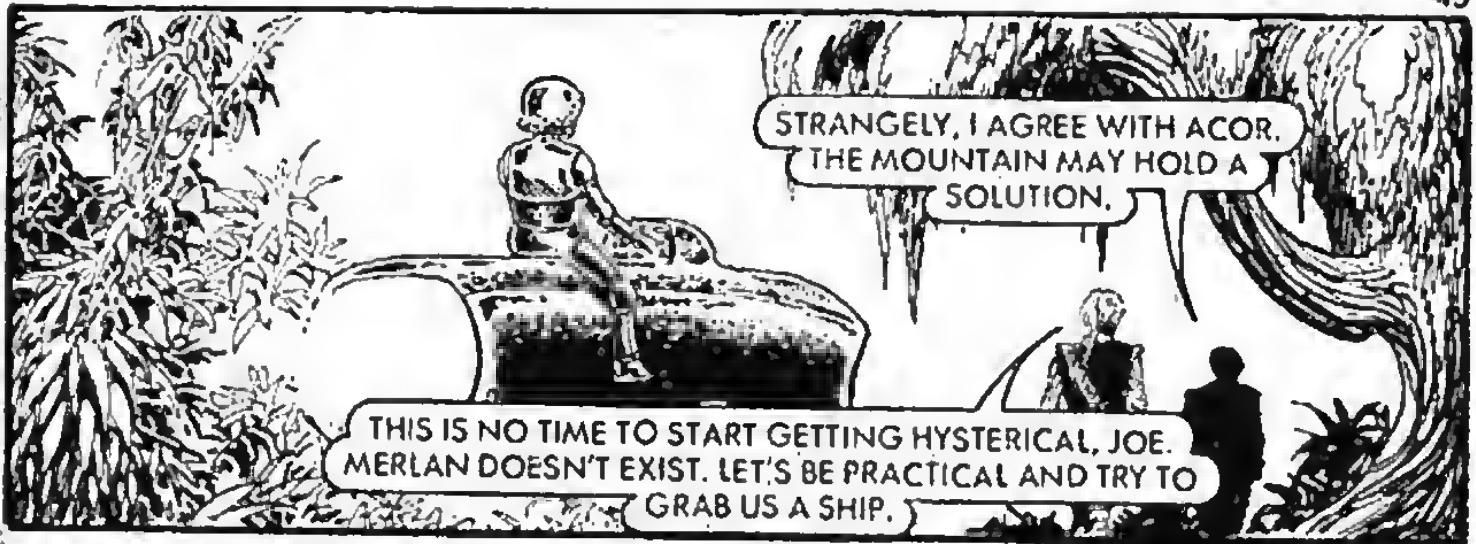


THE SUDDEN ATTACK TOOK THE PIRATES BY SURPRISE.



IT WAS OVER IN SECONDS.





RYDER KNEW THAT THEIR ATTEMPT TO STEAL A SPACECRAFT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY END IN FAILURE.



BUT AS THEY HEADED TOWARDS THE CITY, PIRATE CRAFT CAME OUT TO MEET THEM.



RYDER AND FONG VEERED AWAY FROM THE ONCOMING PIRATE CRAFT BUT ACOR DID NOT ALTER COURSE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, TIN MAN. I SAID TURN BACK.

I AM WORKING ON INDEPENDENT CIRCUITS, LIEUTENANT. I DO NOT HAVE TO OBEY ORDERS. HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAIN. I WILL COVER YOUR RETREAT.

THE ROBOT IGNORED RYDER'S COMMANDS TO TURN BACK.

WELL, IF THERE'S SUCH A THING AS COURAGE IN ROBOTS, HE'S GOT PLENTY. THEY'LL MANGLE HIM.

LOOK AHEAD, STEVE. WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET BACK TO THE FOREST!

LOOKS LIKE WE DON'T HAVE ANY CHOICE. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAIN.

PERHAPS FATE, OR DESTINY, HAD ALREADY MADE THAT OUR DESTINATION.

THE ROBOT RODE INTO BATTLE LIKE A KNIGHT OF OLD EARTH

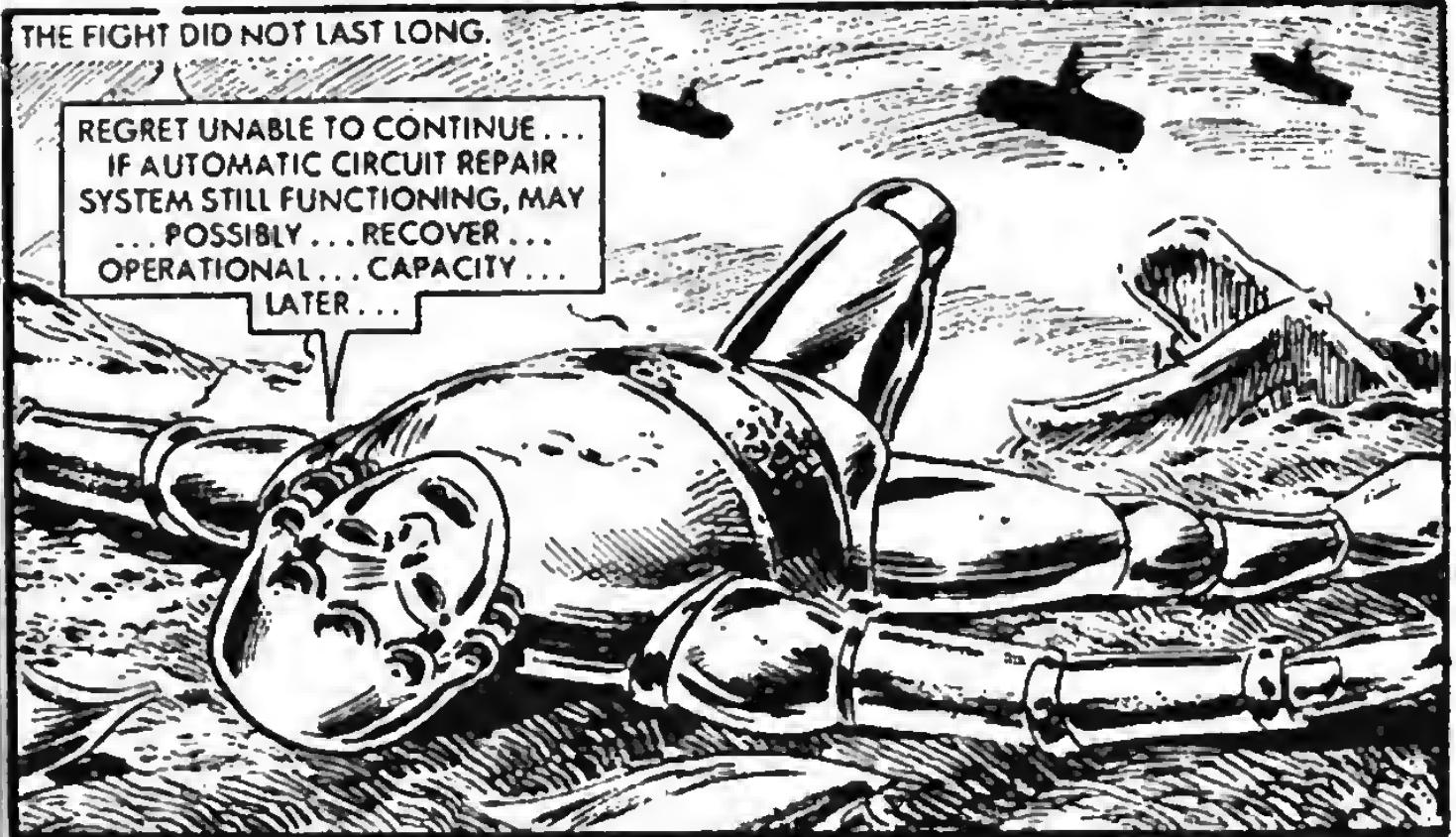
47

by 2/13/01



I AM ON INDEPENDENT
CIRCUIT. I DID NOT HAVE TO
CHOOSE TO BE DESTROYED.
WHY, THEN, DID I DO SO?
IS THIS WHAT HUMANS CALL
SELF SACRIFICE?

THE FIGHT DID NOT LAST LONG.



REGRET UNABLE TO CONTINUE...
IF AUTOMATIC CIRCUIT REPAIR
SYSTEM STILL FUNCTIONING, MAY
... POSSIBLY... RECOVER...
OPERATIONAL... CAPACITY...
LATER...



BUT AS THEY APPROACHED THE MOUNTAIN OF KA, THE PROPULSION UNIT OF FONG'S CRAFT FALTERED.



AS PROPULSION FAILED, THE CRAFT BEGAN TO NOSEDIVE. STEVE ACTED JUST IN TIME.

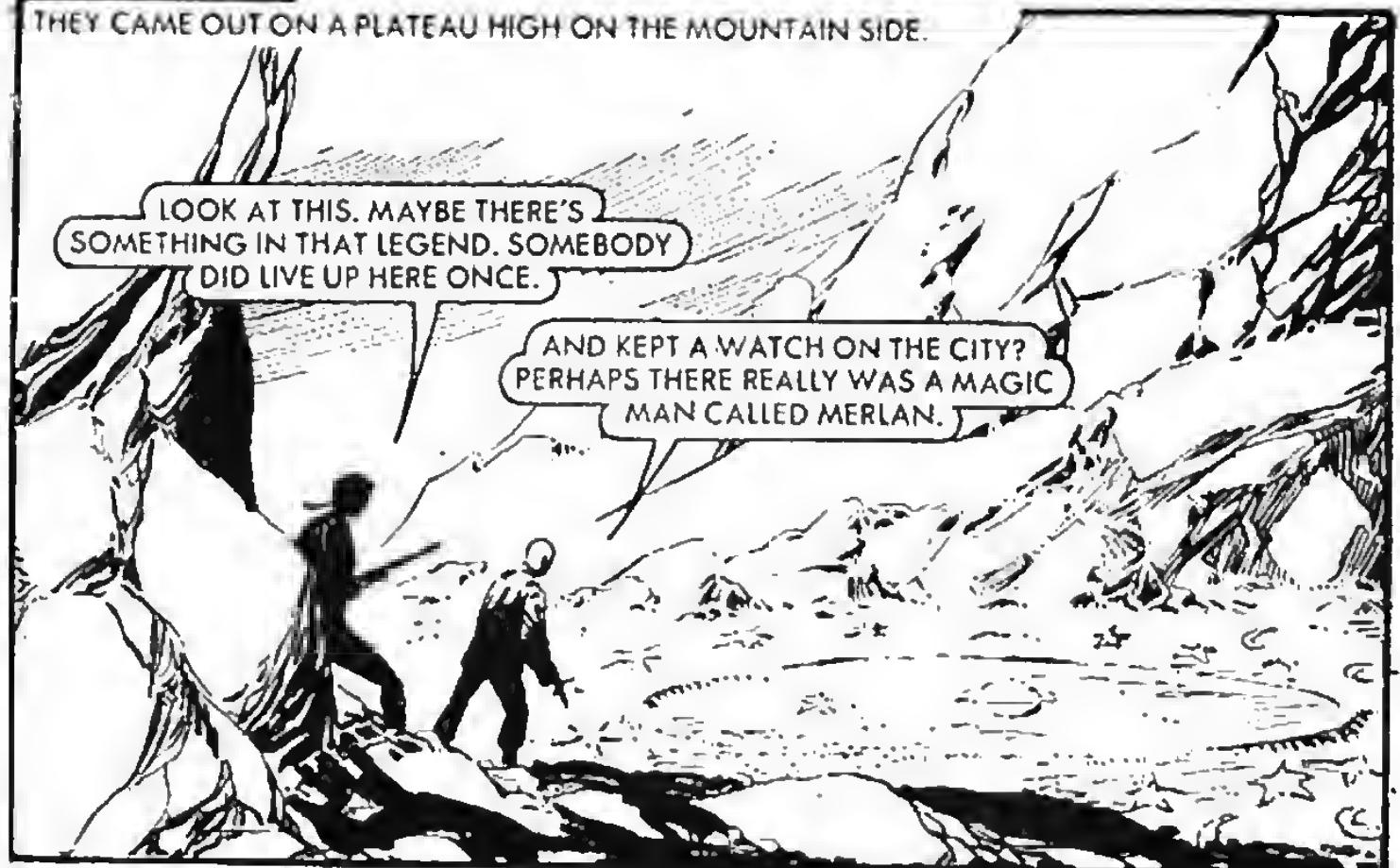




THE TWO MEN MADE THEIR WAY UP THROUGH THE HOLLOW ROCK.



THEY CAME OUT ON A PLATEAU HIGH ON THE MOUNTAIN SIDE.

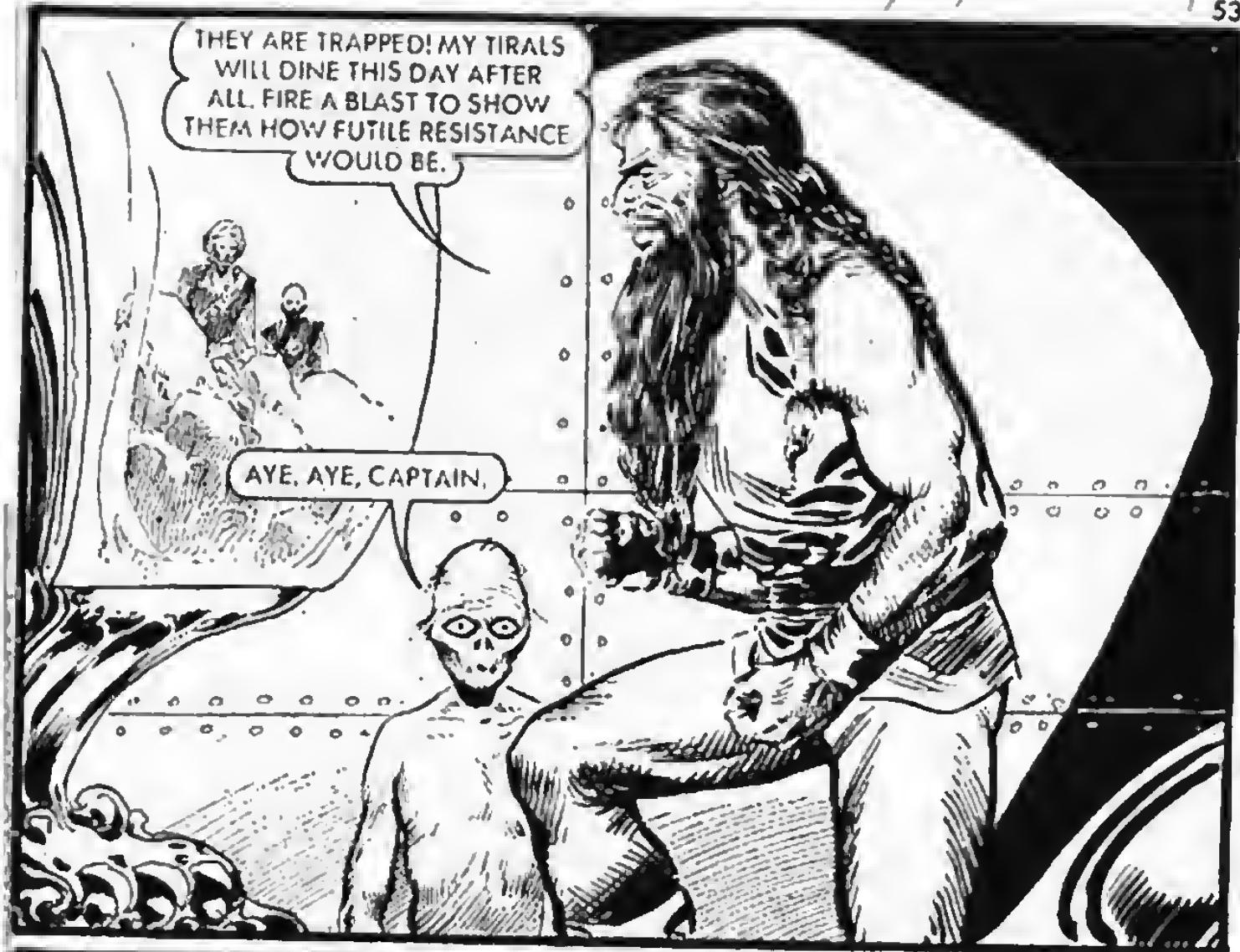




APPROACHING WAS A PIRATE WAR VESSEL.

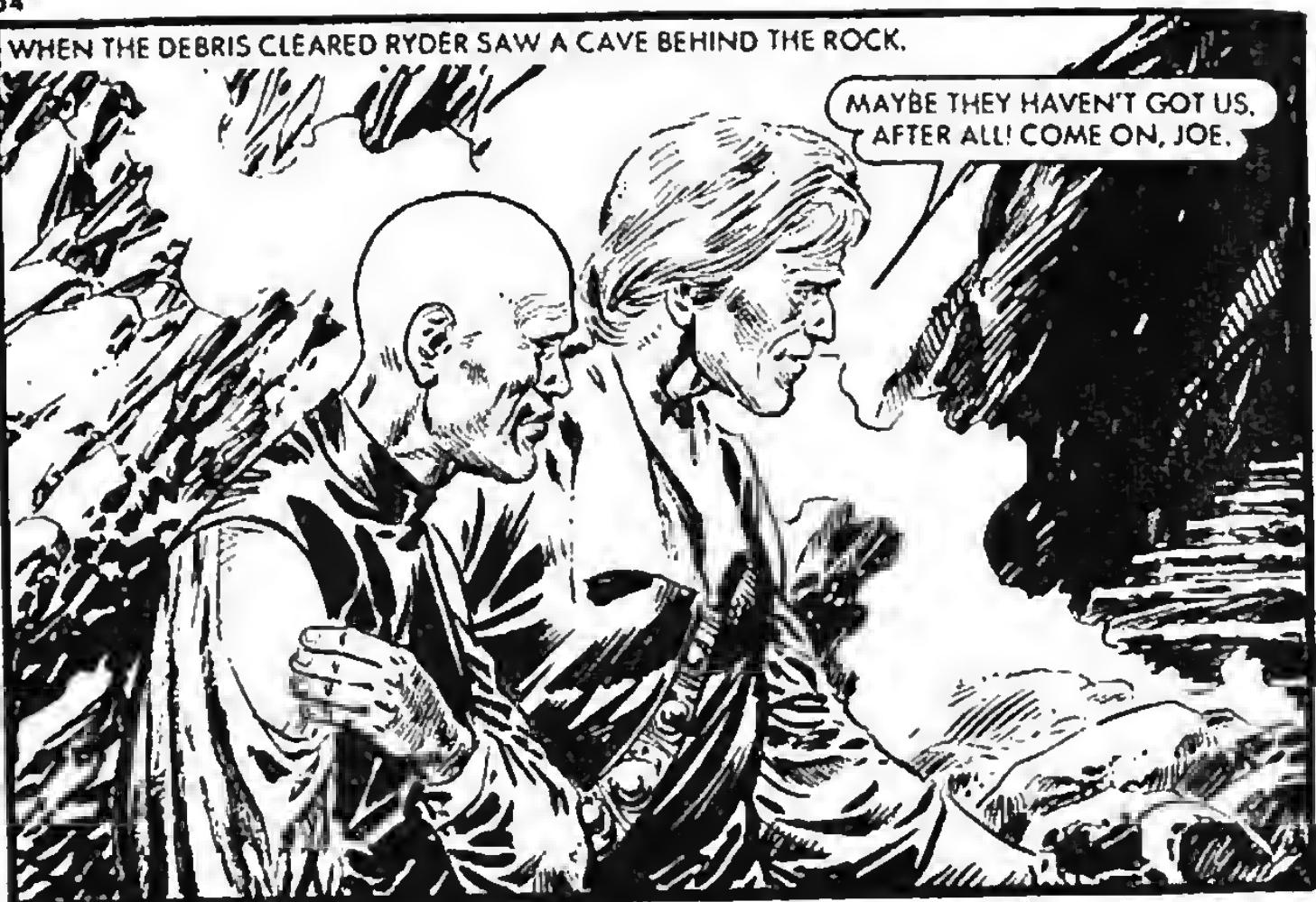
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE
BRINGING IN THE HEAVY GUNS.

AND WE'RE TRAPPED. THESE WALLS
ARE SHEER.



WHEN THE DEBRIS CLEARED RYDER SAW A CAVE BEHIND THE ROCK.

MAYBE THEY HAVEN'T GOT US.
AFTER ALL! COME ON, JOE.



NOW WE HAVE THEM! TRAPPED LIKE RATS IN
THAT CAVE. GO, MY FINE TIRALS—SEEK
THEM OUT!



NO ONE NOTICED THE BATTERED ANTI-GRAV CRAFT HEADING SLOWLY FOR THE MOUNTAIN.

I HAVE LITTLE ENERGY LEFT,
BUT PERHAPS I CAN BE OF SOME
ASSISTANCE.



THE CAVE FLOOR WAS SMOOTH AS MARBLE. ITS WALLS WERE HUNG WITH ANCIENT
AND DECAYING DRAPES.

THROUGH THERE! QUICK!

MERLAN WAS REAL, STEVE! THIS WAS
WHERE HE LIVED. HERE, IN THE MOUNTAIN.

Join our
Facebook
group!





BUT THE ANIMALS SUDDENLY STOPPED AND WOULD GO NO FURTHER.

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THEM? THEY'RE WHINING LIKE SOMETHING'S SCARING THEM.



FROM THE DARKNESS, MOVING IN DEATHLY SILENCE, CAME SKELETAL SOLDIERS.

57

I... DON'T BELIEVE IT!



THE TERRIFIED TIRALS TURNED AND RAN, BUT CAPTAIN TEACH STOOD IN THEIR PATH.



IN THEIR PANIC TO ESCAPE THE GHOSTLY SOLDIERS, THE TIRALS TURNED ON THEIR MASTER.





THE SKELETAL BEINGS BEGAN TO FADE INTO MIST.

THEY'RE DISAPPEARING! AN ILLUSION OF TERROR, DESIGNED
THEY'RE NOT REAL. TO FRIGHTEN INTRUDERS AWAY.

BEYOND THE
ARCHWAY TWO
LIGHTS GLOWED
IN A STRANGE
CABINET.

A COMPUTER! LOOKS LIKE IT'S
BEEN HERE FOR CENTURIES.

WHO DARES DISTURB THE REST
OF THE GREAT MERLAN?



IT IS SAID THAT IF THE PEOPLE OF KA-LOR ARE IN DANGER, THE GREAT MERLAN WILL COME TO THEIR ASSISTANCE.

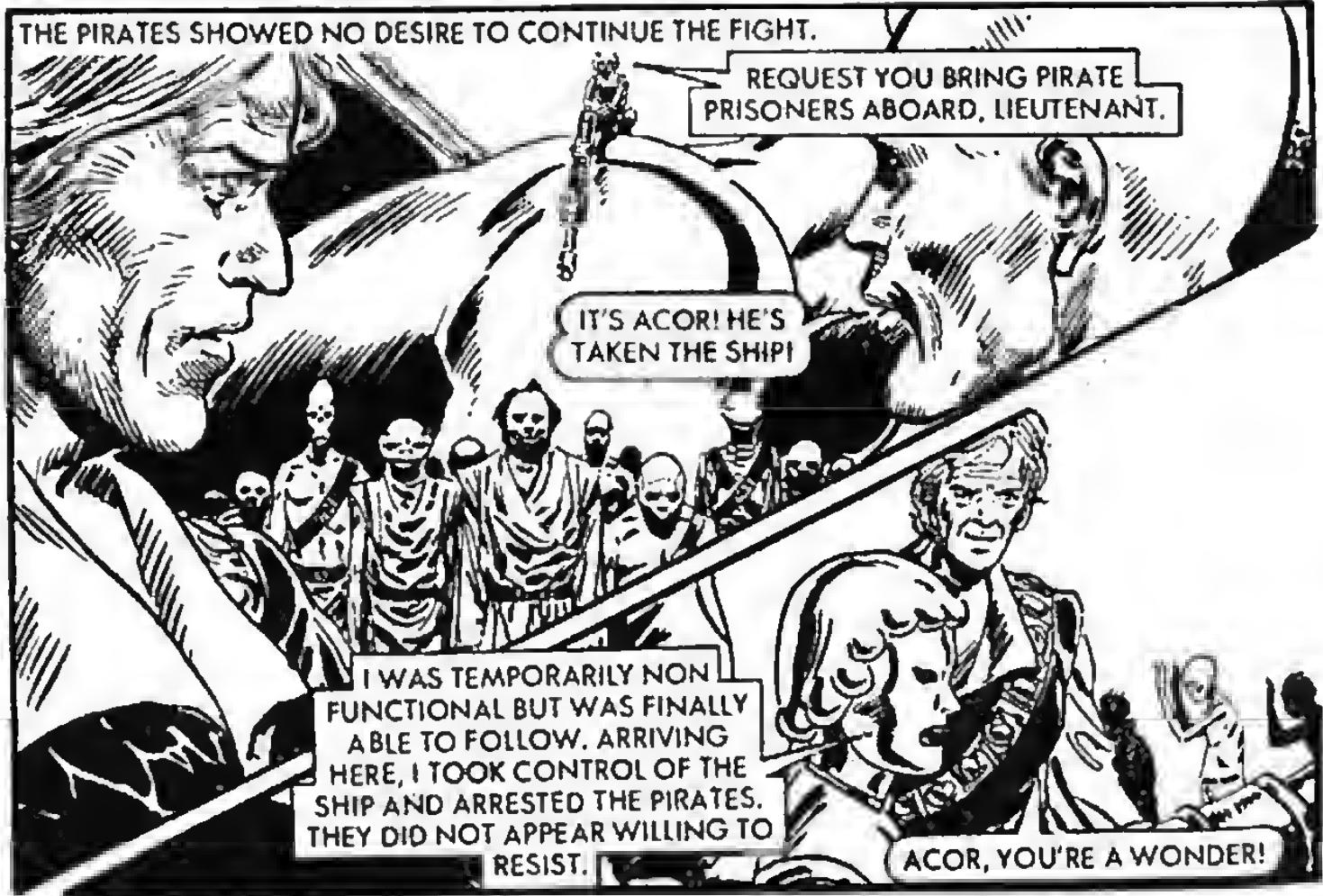
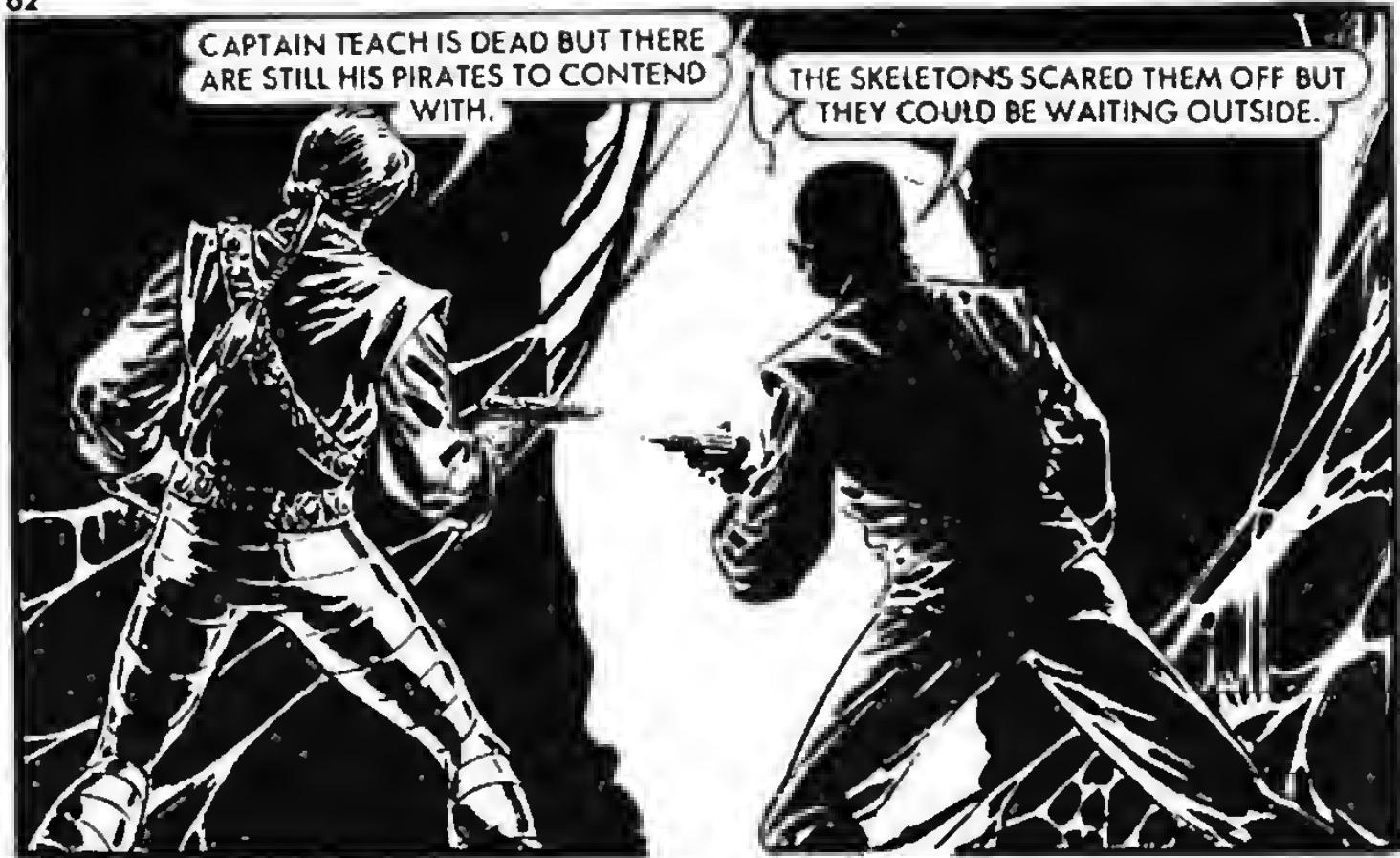
YOU SPEAK TRULY. BUT THERE IS NO DANGER OR MERLAN WOULD HAVE SENSED IT. HE WOULD NOT DESERT HIS PEOPLE.



YOU MAY HAVE AUDIENCE WITH HIM.

THE LEGEND WAS TRUE! MERLAN STILL LIVES HERE, AFTER A THOUSAND YEARS!





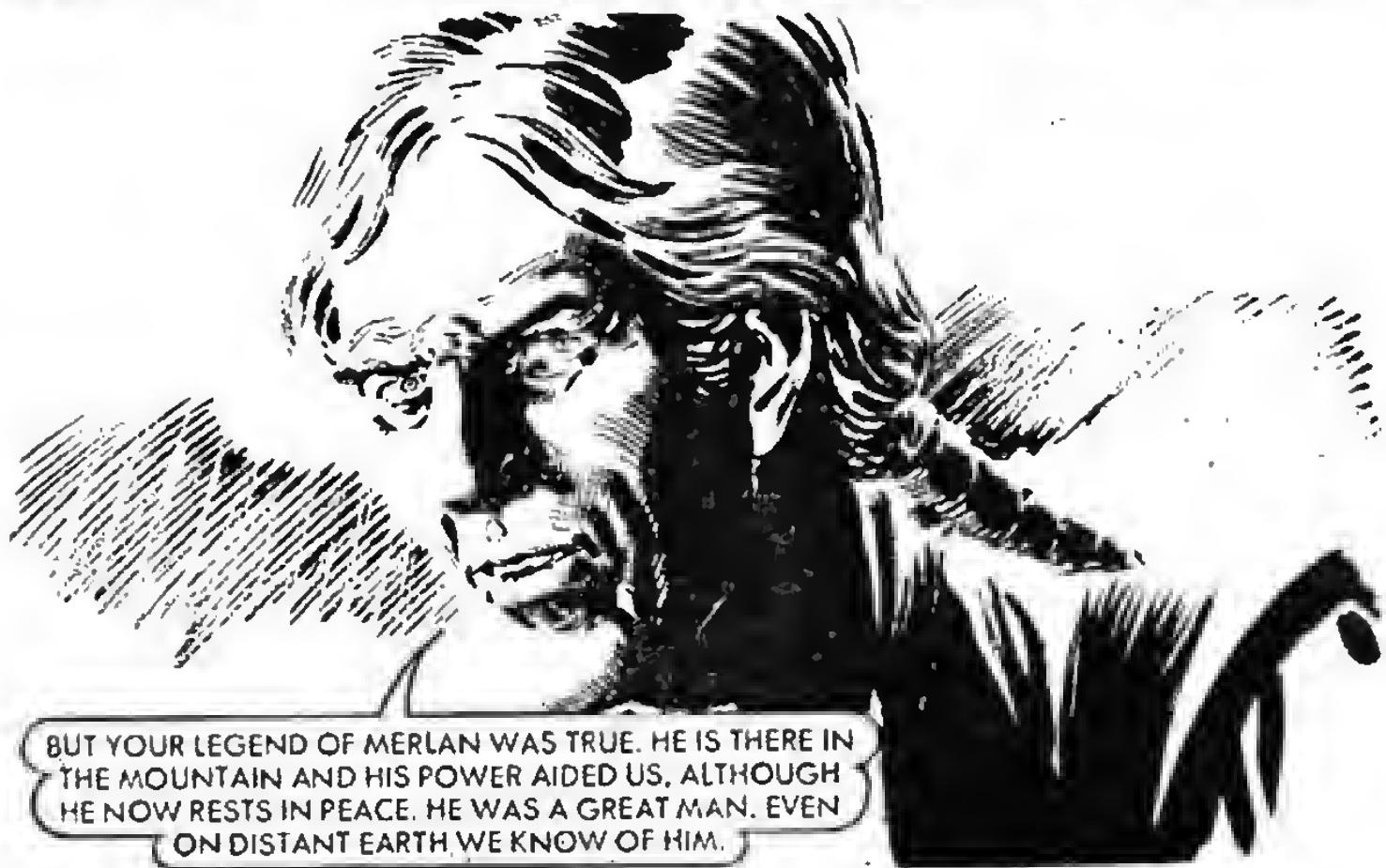
THE PIRATES IN THE CITY PUT UP A FIERCE, BUT BRIEF RESISTANCE . . .



THERE'S ONE MORE THING TO DO
BEFORE WE LEAVE THIS PLANET TO
RETURN TO EARTH. LET THE PEOPLE
OF KA-LOR KNOW THAT THEY MAY
RETURN IN SAFETY TO THEIR HOMES.



THEY RETURNED TO THE FOREST.



THE BLACK CRAFT BLASTED OFF FROM THE PLANET OF KA-LOR AND HEADED EARTHWARD.

I THINK MAYBE I'LL TAKE SOME LEAVE
WHEN WE GET EARTHSIDE, AFTER ALL.

MY FATE WILL BE TO BE BROKEN UP
AND SCRAPPED. I AM TOO BADLY
DAMAGED TO WARRANT REPAIR.

THEY'RE NOT BREAKING YOU UP,
ACOR. I'LL SEE TO IT THAT YOU'RE
REBUILT AS GOOD AS NEW.

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T THINK MUCH
OF COMPUTER-BRAINED TIN MEN.



I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN MAGICIANS,
IT EITHER!

AS THE CAPTURED PIRATE CRAFT WARPED EARTHWARD,
THE PLANET OF KA-LOR RETURNED TO PEACE THANKS TO TWO MEN, A ROBOT AND A MAGICIAN.

Printed and Published in Great Britain by D. C. THOMSON & CO., LTD.,
185 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HS. © D.C. THOMSON & CO., 1982

DON'T FORGET TO READ THIS MONTH'S

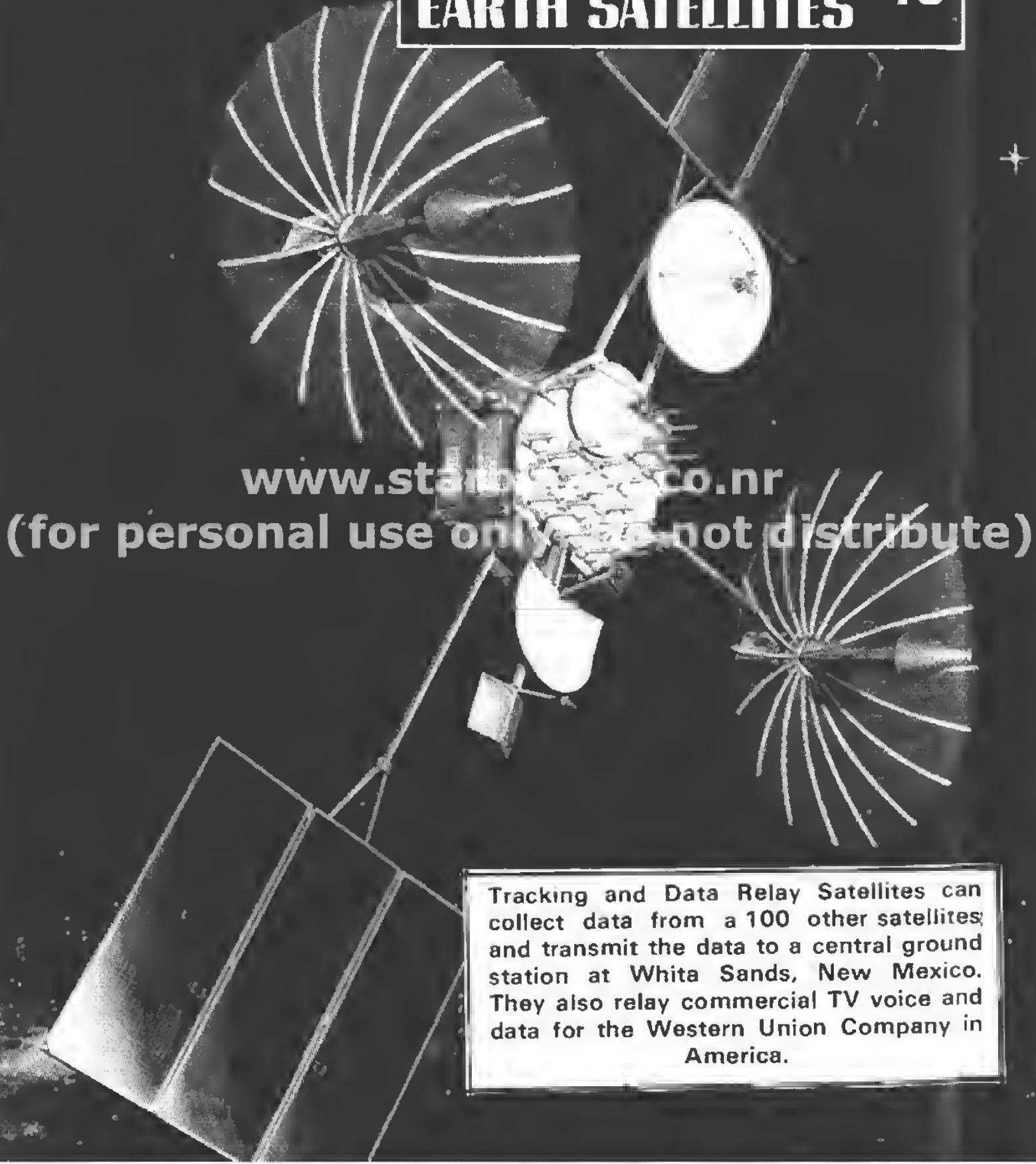
• OTHER

STARBLAZER
SPACE ADVENTURE IN PICTURES NO. 67

**TIME
TUNNEL**

ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSAGENT'S

STARBLAZERS EARTH SATELLITES 15



www.starblazers.co.nr
(for personal use only, do not distribute)

Tracking and Data Relay Satellites can collect data from a 100 other satellites and transmit the data to a central ground station at White Sands, New Mexico. They also relay commercial TV voice and data for the Western Union Company in America.